

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 040694

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OLLOWING REPEAT STATE 040694 ACTION SENT TO AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC
POSTS ADDIS ABABA RABAT CAIRO TRIPOLI TUNIS ALGIERS SECSTATE
DATED 2/23/75;

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 040694

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OAU

SUBJECT:DAVIS NOMINATION: MESSAGE FOR SYG ETEKI

1. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO DELIVER AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY
FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY TO OAU SECRETARY GENERAL
WILLIAM ETEKI MBOUMOUA:

QUOTE: DEAR MR. SECRETARY GENERAL: THE TEXT OF THE 'CON-
SENSUS RESOLUTION' OF TE OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS COM-
MENTING UPON THE NOMINATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES OF NATHANIEL DAVIS TO THE IMPORTANT POSITION
OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS HAS
BEEN BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION BY PRESS ACCOUNTS.

THE SELECTION OF SENIOR OFFICIALS FOR POSTS IN THE UNITED
STATES GOVERNMENT IS A FUNCTION OF AMERICAN SOVEREIGNTY.
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UNLIKE THE ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES FOR ACCREDITING AMBAS-

SADORS FOR WHOM AGREEMENT IS SOUGHT, THE SELECTION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF STATE REMAINS A PURELY INTERNAL, DOMESTIC CONCERN. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WOULD NEVER COMMENT PUBLICLY UPON THE CHOICES OF OTHER SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN FILLING ANY OF THEIR PUBLIC OFFICES. UNDER COMMONLY ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL DECENCY IT HAS THE RIGHT TO EXPECT THE SAME OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS,

PARTICULARLY OF THOSE WHOM IT HAS REGARDED AS FRIENDS. YOU WILL UNDERSTAND, MR SECRETARY GENERAL, THE DEPTH OF MY DISMAY IN LEARNING FROM THE PRESS OF THIS UNPRECEDENTED AND HARMFUL ACT OF THE COUNCIL.

AMBASSADOR DAVIS, AS YOU KNOW, IS A BRILLIANT CAREER OFFICER IN OUR FOREIGN SERVICE. PRESIDENT FORD AND I REPOSE PARTICULAR TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN HIM. INDEED, HE HAS SERVED WITH GREAT DISTINCTION IN HIGH POSTS IN OUR PUBLIC SERVICE UNDER PRESIDENTS KENNEDY, JOHNSON AND NIXON AS DEPUTY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORP, MINISTER TO BULGARIA, AMBASSADOR TO GUATEMALA, AMBASSADOR TO CHILE AND AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE. HE IS NOT YET FIFTY YEARS OLD. THE POST TO WHICH HE HAS BEEN NOMINATED BY THE PRESIDENT IS ONE TO WHICH WE ATTACH VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE. MR. DAVIS WAS SELECTED IN ORDER TO GIVE NEW IMPETUS AND INSPIRATION TO OUR AFRICAN POLICY. I HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE IN HIS ABILITY TO FILL THIS VITAL POSITION WITH DISTINCTION. I AM CERTAIN THAT THE AFRICAN STATESMEN WITH WHOM HE WILL BE DEALING WILL LEARN TO RESPECT HIM AS I DO.

I CANNOT BELIEVE, MR SECRETARY GENERAL, THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WERE AWARE THAT AMBASSADOR DAVIS, WHILE SERVING IN THE PEACE CORPS UNDER PRESIDENT KENNEDY, TRAVELED WIDELY IN AFRICA, THAT HE WAS A MARSHAL IN THE GREAT 1963 CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH IN WASHINGTON LED BY DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, THAT HE HAS SERVED FOR PERIODS TOTALING FIVE YEARS AS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT WASHINGTON'S LEADING BLACK INSTITUTION, HOWARD UNIVERSITY, AND THAT HE HAS DEVOTED MANY YEARS OF HIS SPARE TIME AS A VOLUNTEER WORKER AMONG THE DISADVANTAGED BLACK CITIZENS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WASHINGTON. I AM TRULY SADDENED TO LEARN OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE COUNCIL HAS BESMIRCHED THE REPUTATION OF THIS OUTSTANDING MAN WHO WAS SELECTED PRECISELY BECAUSE WE BELIEVED THAT HE POSSESSED THE BREADTH OF VIEW AND THE COMPASSIONATE UNDERSTANDING FOR A NEW APPROACH TO THIS VITAL POS. TO SUGGEST THAT SUCH A MAN HAS A MISSION TO 'DESTABILIZE' AFRICA, A CONTINENT WITH WHICH WE HAVE ENJOYED EXCELLENT RELATIONS AND IN WHOSE DEVELOPMENT IT

IS OUR POLICY TO ASSIST IS UNACCEPTABLE AND OFFENSIVE.
(I MIGHT ALSO ADD THAT THE WORD 'DESTABILIZE' IS ONE
COINED BY A NEWSPAPER REPORTER, NOT ONE EVER USED BY ANY
U.S. OFFICIAL TO DESCRIBE OUR ACTIVITIES IN ANY COUNTRY.)

I WOULD ASK YOU TO COMMUNICATE TO THE AFRICAN HEADS OF
STATE AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT THE TEXT OF THIS

MESSAGE IN ORDER THAT THE REGRET FELT IN THE UNITED
STATES OVER THIS UNFORTUNATE AND UNFAIR ACTION
IS WELL UNDERSTOOD. UNQUOTE

2. ACTION REQUEST: ALL POSTS EXCEPT CAPETOWN
SHOULD BRING THIS MESSAGE TO ATTENTION OF HIGHEST
LEVELS HOST GOVERNMENT.
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TAGS: PFOR, US, XA, OAU, (DAVIS, NATHANIEL), (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (MBOUMOUA, WILLIAM ETEKI)
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